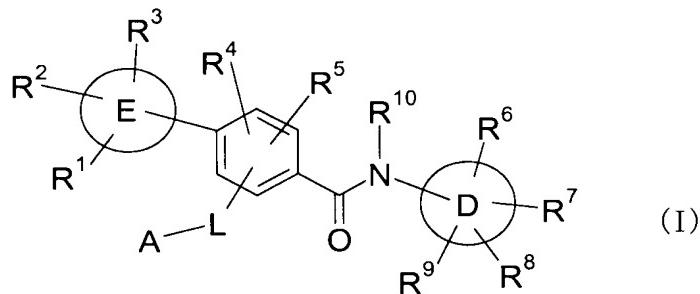


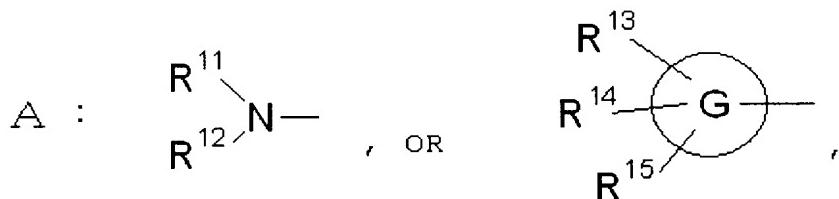
IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claim 1 (Previously Presented): A benzamide derivative represented by formula (I):



wherein the symbols have the following meanings:



L: a lower alkylene;

D ring: a bicyclic heteroaromatic ring selected from the group consisting of quinoline, dihydroquinoline, and tetrahydroquinoline;

E ring: a monocyclic or bicyclic hydrocarbon ring, or a 5- to 12-membered monocyclic or bicyclic heteroaromatic ring containing 1 to 4 atoms selected from the group consisting of N, S, and O;

G ring: a 4- to 12-membered monocyclic or bicyclic heterocycle containing 1 to 4 atoms selected from the group consisting of N, S, and O;

R¹ to R⁹: the same or different, a hydrogen atom, a halogen atom, a lower alkyl, a halogen-substituted lower alkyl, -OH, -SH, -O-lower alkyl, -O-lower alkyl-NH-lower alkyl, -O-lower alkyl-N(lower alkyl)₂, =O, -NH₂, -NH-lower alkyl, -N(lower alkyl)₂, -S-lower alkyl, -SO-lower alkyl, -SO₂-lower alkyl, -CN, -COOH, -C(=O)-O-lower alkyl,

$-C(=O)-NH_2$, $-C(=O)-NH$ -lower alkyl, $-C(=O)-N(lower\ alkyl)_2$, $-NH-C(=O)-O$ -lower alkyl, $-NH-SO_2$ -lower alkyl, $-SO_2-NH_2$, $-SO_2-NH$ -lower alkyl, $-C(=O)$ -lower alkyl, $-NO_2$ or a nitrogen-containing saturated heterocycle;

R^{10} : a hydrogen atom or a lower alkyl;

R^{11} to R^{15} : the same or different, a hydrogen atom, a halogen atom, a lower alkyl, a halogen-substituted lower alkyl, $-OH$, $-O$ -lower alkyl, $-S$ -lower alkyl, $-SO$ -lower alkyl, $-SO_2$ -lower alkyl, $=O$, $-C(=O)H$, $-C(=O)$ -lower alkyl, $-COOH$, $-CN$, $-NH_2$, $-NH$ -lower alkyl, $-N(lower\ alkyl)_2$, $-C(=O)-NH_2$, $-C(=O)-NH$ -lower alkyl, $-C(=O)-N(lower\ alkyl)_2$, $-C(=O)$ -aryl, $-C(=O)-NH$ -aryl, $-NH-C(=O)$ -lower alkyl, $-NH-C(=O)$ -aryl, $-NH-SO_2$ -lower alkyl, $-N(lower\ alkyl)-SO_2$ -lower alkyl, $-lower\ alkylene-NH-SO_2$ -lower alkyl, $-lower\ alkylene-NH-SO_2$ -aryl, $-C(=O)-O$ -lower alkyl, $-lower\ alkylene-OH$, $-lower\ alkylene-C(=O)-NH$ -lower alkyl, $-lower\ alkylene-C(=O)-N(lower\ alkyl)_2$, $-lower\ alkylene-C(=O)-NH_2$, $-lower\ alkylene-C(=O)-OH$, $-lower\ alkylene-O$ -lower alkyl, $-lower\ alkylene-S$ -lower alkyl, $-lower\ alkylene-O-C(=O)$ -lower alkyl, $-lower\ alkylene-NH$ -lower alkyl, $-lower\ alkylene-N(lower\ alkyl)_2$, $-lower\ alkylene$ -aryl, a cycloalkyl, an aryl,

$-(4-$ to 12-membered monocyclic or bicyclic heterocycle containing 1 to 4 atoms selected from the group consisting of N, S, and O),

$-O-(4-$ to 12-membered monocyclic or bicyclic heterocycle containing 1 to 4 atoms selected from the group consisting of N, S, and O),

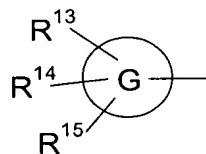
$-lower\ alkylene-(4-$ to 12-membered monocyclic or bicyclic heterocycle containing 1 to 4 atoms selected from the group consisting of N, S, and O),

$-C(=O)-(4-$ to 12-membered monocyclic or bicyclic heterocycle containing 1 to 4 atoms selected from the group consisting of N, S, and O),

–lower alkylene–N(lower alkyl)–(4- to 12-membered monocyclic or bicyclic heterocycle containing 1 to 4 atoms selected from the group consisting of N, S, and O), or
–C(=O)–NH–(4- to 12-membered monocyclic or bicyclic heterocycle containing 1 to 4 atoms selected from the group consisting of N, S, and O),
and the above monocyclic or bicyclic heterocycle may be substituted by halogen atom(s), lower alkyl(s), –O–lower alkyl, or –OH;
or a salt thereof.

Claim 2 (Currently Amended): The compound according to claim 1 or a salt thereof, wherein the E ring in formula (I) is a benzene or thiophene ring.

Claim 3 (Currently Amended): The compound according to claim 2 or a salt thereof, wherein the A ring in formula (I) is:



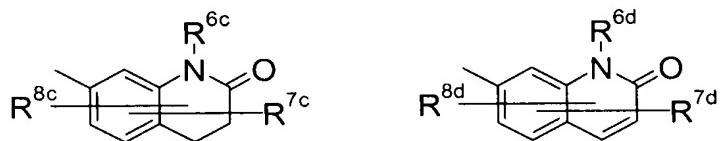
wherein the G ring and R¹³ to R¹⁵ have the same meanings as in formula (I).

Claim 4 (Currently Amended): The compound according to claim 3 or a salt thereof, wherein the G ring is a nitrogen-containing saturated heterocycle wherein a ring nitrogen atom is bonded to L.

Claim 5 (Currently Amended): The compound according to claim 4 or a salt thereof, wherein the G ring is selected from the group consisting of morpholine, piperidine, and pyrrolidine, wherein a ring nitrogen atom of the ring group is bonded to L.

Claims 6-7 (Canceled)

Claim 8 (Currently Amended): The compound according to claim 3 or a salt thereof, wherein the D ring, together with the groups represented by R⁶ to R⁹ to be bonded thereto, form a group represented by the following formulae:

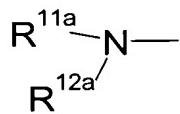


wherein the symbols have the following meanings:

R^{6c} and R^{6d}: the same or different, a hydrogen atom, a lower alkyl, or a halogen-substituted lower alkyl, and

R^{7c}, R^{8c}, R^{7d}, and R^{8d}: the same or different, a hydrogen atom, a halogen atom, a lower alkyl, or a halogen-substituted lower alkyl.

Claim 9 (Currently Amended): The compound according to claim 2 or a salt thereof, wherein the A ring is represented by:



wherein the symbols have the following meanings:

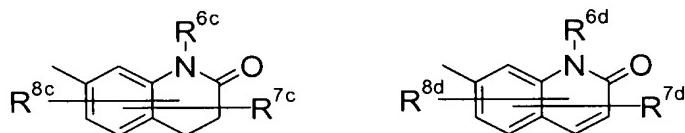
R^{11a} and R^{12a}: the same or different, a hydrogen atom, a lower alkyl, a halogen-substituted lower alkyl, -O-lower alkyl, -SO₂-lower alkyl, -C(=O)H, -C(=O)-lower alkyl, -CN, -NH₂, -NH-lower alkyl, -N(lower alkyl)₂, -C(=O)-NH₂, -C(=O)-NH-lower alkyl, -C(=O)-N(lower alkyl)₂, -C(=O)-aryl, -C(=O)-NH-aryl, -NH-C(=O)-lower alkyl, -NH-C(=O)-aryl, -NH-SO₂-lower alkyl, -N(lower alkyl)-SO₂-lower alkyl, -lower

alkylene-NH-SO₂-lower alkyl, -lower alkylene-NH-SO₂-aryl, -C(=O)-O-lower alkyl,
-lower alkylene-OH, -lower alkylene-C(=O)-NH-lower alkyl, -lower
alkylene-C(=O)-N(lower alkyl)₂, -lower alkylene-C(=O)-NH₂, -lower
alkylene-C(=O)-OH, -lower alkylene-O-lower alkyl, -lower alkylene-S-lower alkyl,
-lower alkylene-O-C(=O)-lower alkyl, -lower alkylene-NH-lower alkyl, -lower
alkylene-N(lower alkyl)₂, -lower alkylene-aryl, a cycloalkyl, an aryl,
-(4- to 12-membered monocyclic or bicyclic heterocycle containing 1 to 4 atoms
selected from the group consisting of N, S, and O),
-O-(4- to 12-membered monocyclic or bicyclic heterocycle containing 1 to 4 atoms
selected from the group consisting of N, S, and O),
-lower alkylene-(4- to 12-membered monocyclic or bicyclic heterocycle containing 1
to 4 atoms selected from the group consisting of N, S, and O),
-C(=O)-(4- to 12-membered monocyclic or bicyclic heterocycle containing 1 to 4
atoms selected from the group consisting of N, S, and O),
-lower alkylene-N(lower alkyl)-(4- to 12-membered monocyclic or bicyclic
heterocycle containing 1 to 4 atoms selected from the group consisting of N, S, and O), or
-C(=O)-NH-(4- to 12-membered monocyclic or bicyclic heterocycle containing 1 to
4 atoms selected from the group consisting of N, S, and O), and
the above monocyclic or bicyclic heterocycle may be substituted by a halogen atom, a
lower alkyl, -O-lower alkyl, or -OH.

Claim 10 (Currently Amended): The compound according to claim 9 or a salt thereof, wherein R^{11a} is a lower alkyl and R^{12a} is a group selected from the group consisting of —lower alkylene—O—lower alkyl, —lower alkylene—S—lower alkyl, —lower alkylene—NH—lower alkyl, —lower alkylene—N(lower alkyl)₂, —lower alkylene—OH, —lower alkylene—C(=O)—NH—lower alkyl, —lower alkylene—C(=O)—N(lower alkyl)₂, —lower alkylene—aryl, a cycloalkyl, an aryl, —(monocyclic or bicyclic heterocycle), and —lower alkylene—(monocyclic or bicyclic heterocycle).

Claims 11-12 (Canceled):

Claim 13 (Currently Amended): The compound according to claim 9 or a salt thereof, wherein the D ring, together with the groups represented by R⁶ to R⁹ to be bonded thereto, form a group represented by the following formulae:



wherein the symbols have the following meanings:

R^{6c} and R^{6d}: the same or different, a hydrogen atom, a lower alkyl, or a halogen-substituted lower alkyl, and

R^{7c}, R^{8c}, R^{7d}, and R^{8d}: the same or different, a hydrogen atom, a halogen atom, a lower alkyl, or a halogen-substituted lower alkyl.

Claim 14 (Canceled):

Claim 15 (Previously Presented): A pharmaceutical composition comprising a benzamide derivative represented by formula (I) according to claim 1 or a salt thereof and a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier.

Claims 16-18 (Canceled):

Claim 19 (Previously Presented): A method for treating pain, which comprises administering a therapeutically effective amount of a benzamide derivative represented by formula (I) according to claim 1 or a salt thereof, to a patient in need thereof.

Claim 20 (Canceled):

Claim 21 (Previously Presented): The compound according to claim 1 or a salt thereof, wherein the benzamide derivative represented by formula (I) is 2-[(2,5-dimethylpyrrolidin-1-yl)methyl]-N-(1-methyl-2-oxo-1,2,3,4-tetrahydroquinolin-7-yl)biphenyl-4-carboxamide.

Claim 22 (Previously Presented): The compound according to claim 1 or a salt thereof, wherein the benzamide derivative represented by formula (I) is N-(1-methyl-2-oxo-1,2,3,4-tetrahydroquinolin-7-yl)-2-[(2-methylpyrrolidin-1-yl)methyl]biphenyl-4-carboxamide.

Claim 23 (Previously Presented): The compound according to claim 1 or a salt thereof, wherein the benzamide derivative represented by formula (I) is 2-{[ethyl(tetrahydro-2H-pyran-4-yl)amino]methyl}-N-(1-methyl-2-oxo-1,2,3,4-tetrahydroquinolin-7-yl)biphenyl-4-carboxamide.

Claim 24 (Previously Presented): The compound according to claim 1 or a salt thereof, wherein the benzamide derivative represented by formula (I) is *N*-(1-methyl-2-oxo-1,2,3,4-tetrahydroquinolin-7-yl)-3-(piperidin-1-ylmethyl)-4-(2-thienyl)benzamide.

Claim 25 (Previously Presented): The compound according to claim 1 or a salt thereof, wherein the benzamide derivative represented by formula (I) is 2-{[ethyl(tetrahydro-2H-thiopyran-4-yl)amino]methyl}-N-(1-methyl-2-oxo-1,2,3,4-tetrahydroquinolin-7-yl)biphenyl-4-carboxamide.

Claim 26 (Previously Presented): The compound according to claim 1 or a salt thereof, wherein the benzamide derivative represented by formula (I) is *N,N*-diethyl-4-[(4-{{[(1-methyl-2-oxo-1,2,3,4-tetrahydroquinolin-7-yl)amino]carbonyl}biphenyl-2-yl)methyl]morpholine-3-carboxamide.

Claims 27-28 (Canceled):